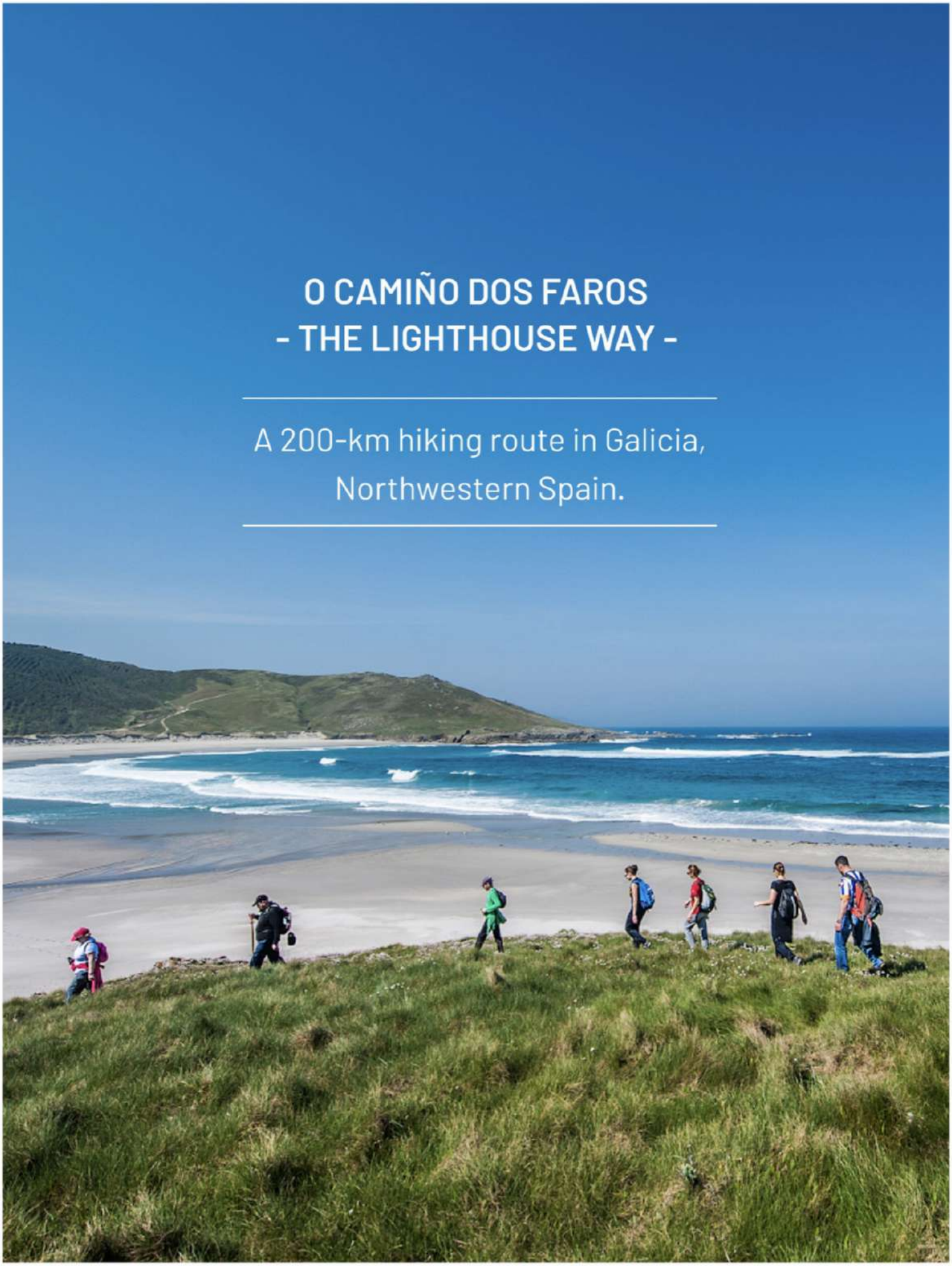
O CAMIÑO DOS FAROS
- THE LIGHTHOUSE WAY -

A 200-km hiking route in Galicia,
Northwestern Spain.



O CAMIÑO DOS FAROS
- THE LIGHTHOUSE WAY -

WORDS AND IMAGES BY **ASOCIACIÓN O CAMIÑO DOS FAROS**

" Camino dos Faros coastal trail is the country's under-the-radar gem. It weaves through the rugged, wild terrain of Costa da Morte on the Atlantic coast of Galicia, Spain."
- National Geographic

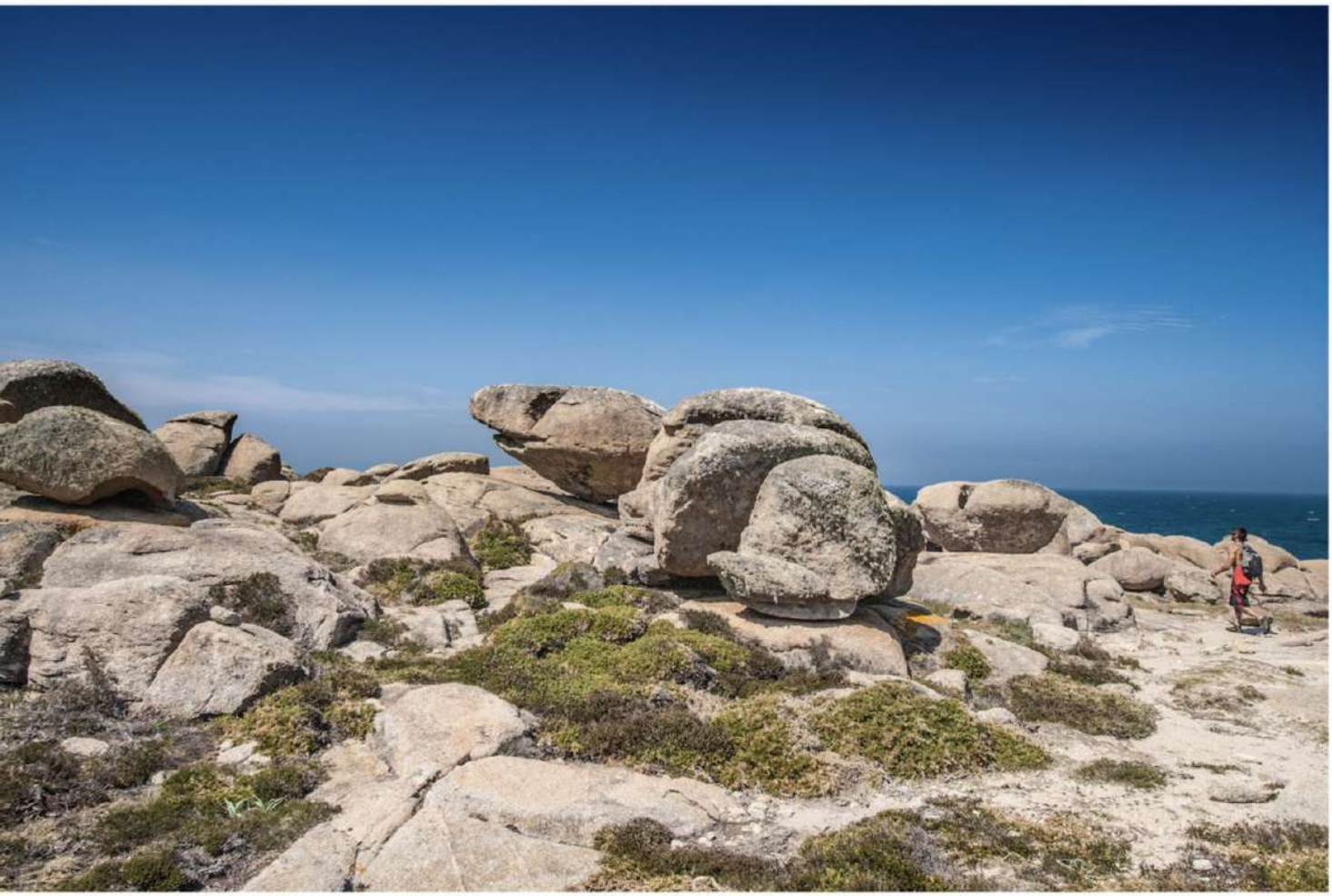
O Camiño dos Faros (The Lighthouse Way) is a 200-km hiking route in *Galicia* (Northwestern Spain) that links the port towns of *Malpica* with *Finisterre*. This striking seaside route follows the *A Costa da Morte* coastline passing a number of lighthouses and many of the most important landmarks of the region. The trail traverses many different landscapes. And, the sea, always to the west, plays the main role. In addition to the lighthouses, there are beaches, dunes, rivers, cliffs, forests, fishing villages, *castros* (ancient fortified settlements), *dolmens* (ancient megalithic structures) and estuaries with a great variety of birds, There are also multiple viewpoints from where to enjoy the sights of the sea breaking in all ways possible, sunsets, and more. Indeed, this is a hiking route, different from others, that features a world full of unique sensations along the historic *Costa da Morte*. This route will astonish any hiker that tries it!

A GUIDE TO TREKKING THE CAMINOS dos FEROS

SECTION 1: MALPICA-NIÑONS - 21.9 Km

The first stage starts at the lighthouse at the port in Malpica, and heads

Trasnos (friends of the trail) walking The Lighthouse Way.



toward Point San Adrian. Malpica is a beautiful fishing village with a port, quaint streets, *The Promenade* and *Area Major Beach*. Next comes *Seaia's Beach* and then on to *Point San Adrian* passing a series of springs called the *Fountains of the Romeros* (people who take part in pilgrimage) where drinking water is available.

From *Point San Adrián*, there are amazing panoramic views of *Malpica* and the *Sisargas* Islands. The route then turns toward the village of *Bao* following ancient fishing paths. Here are the first cliffs of this path and, in places, the ground is soft and muddy. Passing through here will require crossing, knee-deep, a small stream at *Seiruga Beach*. At *Beo,* there are places to stop to have something to eat and drink before heading on.

The walk then continues on to *Brizo* where there are the last houses and the last services of this segment. From there, a more difficult stretch begins along *Monte Nariga* until reaching *The Cape of Saint Adrian* where a lighthouse built by *César Portela*, is situated. The environment of *Punta Nariga* is full of magic including some large rocky formations with the most varied shapes.

From there to the end of this segment, the trail goes by the *Penas do Rubio* along a somewhat complicated stretch to the *Ensenada do Lago*, passing through a cliff area, ending at *Niñón's Beach*. This reach is about 22 km long with rolling terrain and slopes. Plan on about 9 ½ hours or more to complete this segment assuming stops at the various points of interest. It is strongly advised to finish this stage with the daylight.

"Walking one of Europe's most spectacular coastlines" - The Guardian

SECTION 2: NIÑONS-PONTECESO - 26.2 Km
The second stage winds from *Niñóns* to *Ponteceso* through an infinite variety of landscapes. Completing it in a single day is not easy, but may be possible, with peace of mind, in about 10 hours.
It starts at *Niñóns' Beach* and follows the cliff-lined coast adjacent to the *Port of Santa Mariña* and the beautiful *Enseada da Barda*. From there, it

Traba Stone Rocks.

passes along the *Costa da Tremosa* following a demanding path with privileged views leading to *Roncudo's Village*—a unique hamlet that displays architecture based on the same stone and fully adapted to the wind and storms.

Here hikers will discover *Roncudo's Lighthouse* and spot the rocks where seafood collectors, called *Percebeiros,* risk their lives to pluck a precious barnacle delicacy product from the sea. From there, the route passes *Corme's Port*, visiting numerous beaches and *Monte da Facha* until reaching *Valarés Beach*—a perfect place to stop and enjoy the seashore and the nearby pine forest. *Monte Branco* marks the end of the stage and the setting is spectacular! Located here is the mouth of the *Anllóns' River*, with *Tiñosa Island* and the *Barra's Dunes* that form the *Estuary of Insua*. This is a place of the great ornithological importance. This section ends following *The Malecón* corridor to the end up at *Ponteceso's Bridge* right in front of the house of *Eduardo Pondal*, poet and author of the *Anthem of Galicia*.

SECTION 3: PONTECESO-LAXE - 25.2 Km

This segment starts in *Senda do Anllóns* with a 3 km walk adjacent to and estuary where a large number of birds can be seen in their habitat There are also examples here of the *old ribera* carpentry that still survive today. Next, the path goes inland on climbing up the *Rego dos Muíños*—a beautiful stream with small waterfalls and amazing spots to stop and enjoy—while ascending to the *Castro A Cibda* and the *Dombate Dolmen*, two archaeological jewels of *Costa da Morte.* At *Dombate* the path leads back to the coast again, after deviating first to climb *Monte Castelo*—the highest point, at 312 meters, of the *Camiño dos Faros*. Up here, the panoramic views of the *Ría de Corme* and *Laxe* are outstanding! The final part of this segment passes through *Punta do Cabalo*, from where, again, there are vistas *Ría de Corme* and *Laxe*. The path then goes along the coast passing the beautiful *Freixufre Mountain* before reaching the extensive *Laxe* beach. Allowing a full day to hike this rolling segment is recommended.

Trece's Beach.

SECTION 4: LAXE-AROU - 17.7 Km
This fourth stage leads into the heart of the *Costa da Morte*. The entire coast here is a world of big stones reminiscent of the tale of Gulliver in Lilliput. The formations of different shapes and sizes, indeed, make this section a unique landscape! This hike starts in *Laxe* where it will be rewarding to visit the port and *the Church of Santa María da Atalaia*. From here, one can walk to the lighthouse on the *Ruta da Insua*. Approaching the lighthouse, be sure to enjoy two curiosities of nature*: Furna da Espuma* and the *Crystal's Beach*.

From there, continue through the *Enseada da Baleeira* to the *Peñon de Soesto*, enjoying stunning views along the entire route. From *Soesto's Beach*, a very comfortable walk begins crossing the *Punta de Catasol* and *Arnado's Beach* heading on to the lagoons of *Traba*, where a great number of birds can be seen.

From *Mórdomo*, at end of *Traba's Beach*, the path goes through yet another spectacular landscape—*The Camiño dos Faros*. Next the route continues on to *Camelle* and *Sabadelle's Coido. Camelle* is another key point of the route. It is accessed via its beach. Be sure to see the remains of the *Man Museum* at the nearby fishing port and dock. From there, continue along small coastal roads to *Arou*, where this short, but intense, fourth stage of Camiño dos Faros ends.

" O Camiño dos Faros—one of the 50 best adventure vacations in the world" - The Telegraph

SECTION 5: AROU-CAMARIÑAS - 22.7 Km
This stage may offer one of the most intriguing hiking routes ever! It winds along a coast that is tremendously steep and also full of history. A series of shipwrecks, some vessels belonging to the British Navy, occurred here, in an area called *"The Serpant"*, at the end of the 19th century. There were hundreds casualties. Hence, this is the origin of the name, "*Costa da Morte*".

Cape Vilan.

The route then goes through *Xan Ferreiro* to a viewpoint overlooking the village of *Lobeiras* and *Lobeiras beach*. From there, crossing a cobble stone beach, the path reaches the small *Santa Mariña's* port and *Penal de Veo* where there are additional striking views including a large dune and *Trece's Beach, Punta Boi*, and the *English Cemetery*. This is the midpoint *The Camiño dos Faros* with about 100 kilometers walked and another 100 to be walked.

Trece's Beach is an environmental jewel! Here the sea breaks with force near *The English Cemetery*, where the victims of *The Serpent* rest. Continuing from *Punta Boi* to *Vilán* passes along the length of *Reira's Beach*, following a comfortable path along this wild section of the coast to *Vilán's lighthouse.*

Since its construction, *Vilán's Lighthouse* has been the beacon that guides all the ships across these seas and it is a magical waypoint along the *Camiño dos Faros.* After Vilán, the path continues along the coastline, passing by *The Chapel of the Virxe do Monte*, before reaching the center of *Camariñas* next to the fishing port.

SECTION 6: CAMARIÑAS-MUXIA - 32 Km
This is the longest stage of the *Caminos dos Feros* and could take ten hours or more to complete, but trekkers will be rewarded discovering beautiful outdoor spaces such as those at *The Ría de Camariñas* and *Muxía*. The trail passes through the *Ensenada da Basa* and the mouth of the *Rio Grande*, with its calm waters that are home to expanses of shellfish. Here, flocks of egrets and other birds can be seen feeding and taking refuge. Be sure to notice the shellfish farmers working these rich shallows, harvesting especially, cockles, when the tide is low. *Tasaraño, Dor* and *Allo* are rural villages found here that were a part of the authentic Galicia. Here also is *Ponte do Porto*, another village, whose name comes from the 13th century bridge that crosses the *Rio Grande.* Next comes *Cereixo*, with its tidal mill, Santiago's church, an impressive oak and *Cereixo's Towers.*

Leon McCarron and Ben Barrows Forging a Stream in Iraqi Kurdistan . Photo: Emily Garthwaite

"I have traveled some 15 countries hiking and O Camiño dos Faros is in the Top Ten of all routes. It is very authentic. Now you have an obligation: keep it as it is." - Thosten Hoyer (Wander Magazine)

From here, the path narrows, arriving at the *Furna do Sapo*. Further on, there are the beaches of *Area Grande*, *Leis* and spectacular *Lago Beach*, that offers a place for a well-deserved dip and a rest, before walking the second part of this long segment.

Continuing on to *Muxía* the trail ascends to the top of *Corpiño's Mount* revealing another great vista. View the *Punta da Barca*, with its lighthouse next to the *Sanctuary of Virxe da Barca*. These features, and the rock formations make this also a magical place. Enjoy here, one of the best sunsets of the *Costa da Morte*!

SECTION 7: MUXÍA-NEMIÑA - 24.3 Km
This seventh stage is one of the most challenging of the *O Caminos dos Faros*, especially the beginning part, 10 kilometers from *Lourido* to *Moreira,* with its continuous ups and downs. Plan on a full day and be fit to walk this section.

Leaving *Muxía,* the trail goes by way of *O Coido* crossing *Lourido's Beach* and starts an ascent of *Cachelmo's Mountain*. Hikers are rewarded with another spectacular overlook at the top, with *Muxía* and *Vilán* in the background, and *Punta Buitra* with *Touriñán* to the West. From there, there begins a tricky descent begins passing closer to *Punta Buitra* and the hill of the same name. From here, the rest of this segment can be viewed including: *Cuño; O Pedrouzo; Moreira;* and the whole peninsula the forms *Touriñán's Cape*. Moving on from *Moreira*, a path leads closer to *Touriñán's Lighthouse.* This is, the westernmost point of *Camiño dos Faros* and the peninsula of Spain. On nearby, *Castelo's island*, the last sunset of Europe happens many days per year. The path then continues on to *Talon's Village* and the extensive *Nemiña's Beach*, the end of this penultimate stage.

Leon McCarron and Ben Barrows Forging a Stream in Iraqi Kurdistan . Photo: Emily Garthwaite

" Shipwrecks and rainbows, beach towns and barnacles. The Coast of Death has thrilled me rather than killed me" - The Times

SECTION 8: NEMIÑA-FISTERRA - 26.2 Km

The final stage of this *Camiño dos Faros* leaves from *Nemiña's Beach*, crossing the entire sandy area until reaching the estuary of *Ría de Lires*. This area, that skirts along *Vaosilveiro's Bridge* and *Lires' Villa*is, is the smallest estuary in *Galicia* and is an ornithological paradise. From there, the route becomes more difficult following *Canosa's Coast*, crossing the *Cliffs of Punta Besugueira* and the *Mexadoir* through yet another unique landscape that the *Camiño dos Faros* offers. Next comes, *Rostro's Beach*—another universe of sensations, with its 2 kilometers of sand and the constant roar of the sea filling everything. And then the trail continues on to *Arnela's Beach* to begin the ascent to *Cabo da Nave*, meandering between rocks among the highest cliffs of the route. After this stretch, enjoying a well-deserved rest is recommended before going on to *Mar de Fora's Beach*.

Finally, the route crosses the western part of the Cape and ascends *Facho's Mountain with* the first views of the *Fisterra's Lighthouse.* This last segment of path, arriving at the Lighthouse completes the journey and is a path totally different from the rest of *O Camiño dos Faros*.

We hope you will have the opportunity soon to enjoy this very special coastal trail. For *more information contact the O* Caminos dos Faros Association (http://www.caminodosfaros.com/en/association-o-camino-dos-faros/). We are a non-profit organization promoting *The Lighthouse Way*. Our goal is not only the development of this route, but to accomplish so that people can make it with the maximum respect for nature.

The Association of O Camiño dos Faros is a non-profit organization pursing the promotion and improvement of the *The Lighthouse Way.*

Leon McCarron and Ben Barrows Forging a Stream in Iraqi Kurdistan . Photo: Emily Garthwaite